

AMERICAN RESEARCH CENTER IN EGYPT

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FOGG ART MUSEUM
CAMBRIDGE 38, MASSACHUSETTS

June 27, 1951

Newsletter Number Two

Dear Member:

We have received an account of the lecture given at the Center in Cairo by Director William Stevenson Smith; he spoke to an audience of over one hundred upon "The Household of the Mother of Cheops, a Great Lady of the Pyramid Age."

Dr. Smith has been appointed Delegate of the Center to the Twenty-second International Congress of Orientalists, which is to be held at Istanbul in the early fall.

The Center's new address in Cairo is:

American Research Center in Egypt
Tagher Building
Sharia el Shams
Garden City, Cairo

A summary of our financial operation from the date of organization to March 1, 1951 follows:

Received as dues and donations	\$2,751.00
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Expenditures

Legal Services and Expenses	309.10
Stationery and Office Supplies	73.44
Clerical Services	99.32
Travel	609.28
Expenses of Meeting	96.00
Miscellaneous	9.12
	<u>1,196.26</u>

Balance in Bank, March 1, 1951

\$1,554.74

Inv. B. 10495 ○



Of the two larger items of expenditure, the Legal Expenses are those connected with our incorporation and with the establishment of our tax-free status; and the item Travel consists of the contribution it was thought proper to make towards the travelling expenses of our Director.

Our Membership Secretary, Richard A. Parker, Professor of Egyptology at Brown University, has sent the following delightful account of his recent visit to Egypt. The fruits of his researches will no doubt be more savory to us than the accomplishment was to him: those of us who cannot visit Egypt in the near future will find some consolation in this evidence that a visit is not all roses.

"Shortly after the close of the first semester at Brown University I left for Egypt for a stay of nearly three months. I had not been in Egypt since I turned over the directorship of the University of Chicago expedition at Chicago House, Luxor, to George Hughes very early in 1949; and I was anxious to see what two years' work had brought to light from Egypt's buried past. I had the primary purpose, however, of rechecking some of my previous copies of astronomical ceilings and of recording a few new ones as well as a few which time had not permitted me to record before. During my stay at home, I and my colleague Otto Neugebauer had worked over much of the material which we had previously collected toward the goal of a publication of all Egyptian astronomical texts; and various questions about correct readings had come up which could of course be answered only in the field.

"My route to Egypt took me through Paris, where I greeted old friends and was most hospitably entertained. This seems a good opportunity to make an informal announcement to the Center's members that beginning with the coming fall Brown University plans to invite an annual visiting Professor of Egyptology from abroad and that the one who will inaugurate the program is Jean-Jacques Clère of the École Pratique des Hautes Études. Certainly we at Brown will benefit from the stimulus provided by such visitors, and it is our hope that they will derive benefit from their contacts with their American colleagues and with American museums. Professor and Mrs. Clère will arrive in New York on September 5th and will be with us for the full scholastic year.

"On the Mediterranean it was pleasant to find as shipmates Professor Carl Kraeling, Director of the Oriental Institute, Mr. Adrian Van Sinderen and Mr. Richard Maynard of the Brooklyn Institute and their wives. The Kraelings were visiting the Oriental Institute expeditions in the Near East, and I was to see much of them again in Luxor. The Van Sinderens and the Maynards had the delightful prospect before them of a flight to Lake Victoria, an overland trip to Stanleyville and a

boat ride down the Congo.

"Since I was anxious to get to Luxor as soon as possible and get down to work I stayed only three days in Cairo after my arrival in Egypt on February 4th. I did meet Robert Black and Judge Brinton, both loyal supporters of the Center in Egypt. They were eagerly awaiting the arrival of Bill Smith so that the Center might formally get under way. Visits to the museum, to the Department of Antiquities, and to the French Institute rapidly filled up my limited time; but I counted on a longer stay in Cairo toward the end of my visit. I reached Luxor and Chicago House on the morning of the 8th, and I was not to leave for two full months. The Egypt of Luxor is the Egypt I know by far the best, and it was pleasant to greet old friends and take up once more the daily round of work in that memorable place.

"Most of what I had to do was concentrated in the Valley of the Kings. The astronomical ceilings in the tombs of Ramses VI, VII and IX had to be rechecked; and copies had to be made of those in Merneptah and Tausert. This was all fairly straightforward and not unpleasant work, difficult only in the necessity of getting up as close as possible to the vaulted ceilings by stepladder and of getting sufficient illumination on the subject. A flashlight and a lantern hung from the end of a long pole were usually adequate. Fortunately I had excellent photographs taken by Charles Nims of Chicago House to help me. Some of his experiments in photographing the same subject with different films and different filters have produced really astonishing results. In some cases in our future publications it will certainly be necessary to reproduce the same subject at least twice so as to do full justice to it.

"One tomb, however, which I was not looking forward to working in was that of Pedamenope, the largest of the private tombs, having twenty-two chambers. This had been closed for years because it had for long been the haven of bats, and they had so impregnated the tomb with ammonia that it was exceedingly unpleasant to enter. Though it is now accessible, there is no ventilation other than the door; and years must elapse before it will become a stop on the itinerary of the ordinary tourist - though its size and its unique features make it well worth a visit. To reach the sarcophagus chamber, which has a vaulted astronomical ceiling, it is necessary twice to descend pits about twenty feet deep. This can be done only by bringing in ladders. From this lowest level another shorter ladder is needed to mount to the sarcophagus chamber. As one goes down in the tomb from level to level the heat and the smell increase until the greatest concentration of both is reached in the sarcophagus chamber. And then of course I had to mount a stepladder and get as close as I could to the ceiling! I have never perspired as I did in that situation.

"Unfortunately the morning in Pedamenope was not an unique experience. Zachariah Goneim, the Chief Inspector of Upper Egypt for the Department of Antiquities, had two years ago begun the clearance of the tomb of Mentemhet, which was situated a short distance to the west of that of Pedamenope. This was revealed to be of roughly the same size as the latter, though it had only one pit where a ladder was necessary. Like its neighbor, moreover, it had been the home of bats for centuries;

and if anything it was in a worse condition in so far as heat and smell were concerned. Because of its general similarity to Pedamenope, Charles Nims had guessed it might also have an astronomical ceiling. I could cheerfully have throttled him when we made an exploratory visit and found he was correct. He had to suffer as much as I, however, by photographing it for me before I went back myself. This I put off as long as I could; and it was nearly the end of my Luxor stay before I returned to the tomb and to the distasteful task of recording the ceiling.

"One virtue may be claimed for these tombs, however. A fifteen-minute visit to Pedamenope produced a complete cure for the sinusitis from which Bill Smith was suffering when he came to Luxor soon after his arrival in Egypt, after taking up the Directorship of the Center. Bill's stay in Luxor was short but productive. Together we examined the enormous number of Akhnaton blocks which have come out of the second pylon at Karnak, as well as those already in Chevrier's magazines, and the conviction grew in us that Amarna itself must now take second place to Luxor from the standpoint of sheer quantity of material available. Nor could we, when standing in the tomb of Kheriuf and remembering the mass of Akhnaton material, fail to appreciate the artistic problem posed by the commonly accepted coregency between Amenhotep III and Akhnaton. The tomb of Kheriuf is quite un-Amarna in style but must be dated to the end of Amenhotep III's reign, when presumably the coregency had already lasted some ten years.

"One of the pleasures of staying at Chicago House is that sooner or later all Egyptologists show up there for short or long stays. During my two months, besides Bill Smith, we were visited by Sir Alan H. Gardiner who was enjoying his first trip to Egypt in some twenty years, Peter Shinnie, Sudan Commissioner of Archaeology, Harry James and Michael Apted of the Egypt Exploration Society who were getting equipment for work at Saqqara, Herbert Ricks of the new Swiss Institute, A. Varille, A. Mekhitarian who was photographing in the tombs, J. Vercoutter who was relaxing after his season at Dara by hunting Aegeans in the tombs, A. Piankoff who was continuing his work in the tomb of Ramses VI, François Daumas who would drop in once in a while from Dendera where he is continuing Chassinat's work, Jean Sainte Fare Garnot and his wife with whom I visited Edfu where he had worked with the Franco-Polish expedition, and others whom I have momentarily forgotten. Then there was the French Institute dig north of Karnak to visit, where Robichon has been doing painstaking work on the temple of Montu, aided by Barguet, Leclant and Sauneron. Barguet and Leclant have heroically taken upon themselves the publication of the tomb of Mentemhet which I have already described. Sauneron plans the recording and publication of the temple of Esna.

"Besides taking out Amarna-style blocks by the thousands from the second pylon, Chevrier has been clearing out the northeast corner of the Karnak enclosure. Here he has found several small chapels, some minor objects, and a beautiful head and bust of an 18th dynasty royal statue.

"Not all of my own work was confined to Luxor. Photographic recording expeditions were made to Dendera and to Sohag. Near the latter town at a small site by the eastern cliffs known as Salamûni,

Nims and I found five previously unknown or at least unrecorded zodiacs which date, in all probability, from the first or second centuries of our era. They should be of great value for zodiac iconography. Unfortunately the lighting equipment failed after only one ceiling had been photographed, and it proved impossible to return during the rest of my stay. Nims hopes to get the rest of them for me next season.

"It also proved impossible for me to get to Hermopolis despite the kind invitation of Professor Sami Gabra who has been doing such fine work at that most interesting site. There are four chapels with astronomical ceilings there though all but one are rather fragmentary. Two have been photographed but still need to be seen at first hand. This is more work for the future.

"The mention of Professor Gabra brings to mind how much my Egyptian colleagues contributed to the pleasures and the productivity of my trip. In Luxor, Zachariah Goneim, before he left for his new post at Saqqara, and Labib Habashi, who succeeded him as Chief Inspector, were always most helpful, Labib especially going to great lengths in helping me arrange my various trips. The Director of the Museum, Abbas Bey Bayoumi, was quite cooperative in having photographs made for me, as was also Gamal Salim. Professor Abdel Monem Abubakr of Farouk I University, generously made available to me his transcription of the Cairo papyrus of lucky and unlucky days. It was through no lack of invitation from Ahmed Fakhry, newly appointed to carry on the pyramids project, that I was unable to see his exceedingly interesting work at Dahshur.

"All of which means that the Center, of which I was a representative, is assured of the friendliest welcome and cooperation; and this is true not only for our Egyptian colleagues but also for such institutions as the French and Swiss Institutes, and, of course, the American University in Cairo which is especially interested in us. This was emphasized for me personally when I offered a lecture on star clocks under the auspices of the Center, an occasion which served as its formal inauguration in Cairo. That over a hundred persons came was to me a convincing demonstration of interest in the Center, rather than in my subject. The opportunity and the welcome are there. We have only to accept them.

"In Cairo I stayed at Mena House so as to have the advantage of daily discussion with our Director. Together we made visits to the museum and to neighboring digs. Together we talked over the present and future of the Center. That the Center was formally recognized as an organization to which Fulbright appointees can be attached was extremely gratifying to both of us. When I left Egypt toward the end of April I had the secure feeling that our Director and his assistant Mr. Sloane had made an excellent start and the future looked bright."

Mr. William K. Simpson, Assistant in the Department of Egyptian Art at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, had an opportunity of finding the kind of help which it is our object to afford in increasing measure to scholars and visitors to Egypt from this country;

and he sends us the following:

"I have recently returned from the British School of Archaeology excavations at Nimrud, Iraw, where I was sent by the Metropolitan Museum as its representative. On my way back I took the opportunity of spending almost four weeks in Cairo and Luxor. These weeks were made much more profitable for me by the presence in Egypt of the American Research Center in the person of William Stevenson Smith, who very kindly aided me in many ways. In Cairo I stayed at the same hotel as Mr. Smith and we therefore had many opportunities of discussing Egyptian archaeology together.

"Since transportation to Saqqara and other sites is somewhat difficult, Mr. Smith's car was of particular assistance. We made frequent trips to Giza to see the mastabas and later to check some drawings in the tomb of Meres-ankh III. We saw Dr. Abubakr and Dr. Sami Sheruda who are excavating in the Western Cemetery with great success, and we made several calls on Dr. Ahmed Fakhry who is in charge of the pyramid project which this year has been centered at Dahshur where they have excavated the temple on the East side of the Bent Pyramid. At Saqqara I had the opportunity of seeing many of the principal monuments. On several occasions we visited the Egypt Exploration Society copying project at the tomb of Khenty-ka (Ikhekhy) where Mr. Apted and Mr. James were working. Later after my return from Luxor I went down to South Saqqara and Dahshur with two of the assistants of Ahmed Fakhry.

"In Luxor I divided my time between the temples of the East bank and the tombs on the West bank. M. Labib Habashi, the Director of Antiquities at Luxor, and M. Alexandre Varille were especially helpful. At Karnak M. Chevrier has been continuing his work dismantling the second pylon which is made up of many interesting blocks from earlier buildings. The French Institute was carrying out its project at the temple of Montu where M. Robichon, M. Barguet, and M. Leclant have been conducting a very careful program designed to find out in exactly what way the blocks of earlier buildings were reemployed.

"On my return to Cairo I expected to be able to revisit the Cairo Museum and to see the excavations at Helwan conducted by Saki Saad, a trip which Mr. Smith had kindly arranged. Unfortunately, a two day illness prevented me from carrying this out.

"During the early part of my stay I attended the lecture given by Mr. Smith and sponsored by the Center on the famous furniture of Hetepheres. It was well attended, especially by the Egyptians. A few days before I left Mr. Ray Garner arrived in Egypt to take colored movies of the ancient sites. I am certain that he will find the Center as much help as I did.

"The Center with Dr. Smith as director and Mr. Mark Sloane as administrative secretary has made a fine beginning and is the subject of considerable interest on the part of our fellow Egyptian archaeologists. Since excavation in Egypt carried out by American institutions has virtually stopped, I hope that the Center will become as permanent a part of the American tradition of archaeology in Egypt as the expeditions of Harvard University-Boston Museum of Fine Arts, The Metropolitan Museum,

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and the Universities of Pennsylvania and Chicago have been in the past.

"I hope that the Center will become firmly established this year, so that in the next few years to come it can take its place along with the French Institute and the newly organized Swiss Institute which have contributed much to archaeology and related research in Egypt."

We are enclosing an article which will be of interest to all our Members, written by our Vice-President Dows Dunham, Curator of Egyptian Art in the Boston Museum of Fine Arts. Mr. Dunham is one of the world's senior Egyptologists, having gone out to Egypt to take up his life's work shortly after his graduation from Harvard, and before the first World War; his knowledge of the extension of Egyptian civilization in the Sudan, of which this article treats a fascinating illustration, is unique.

In closing, may I urge all Members who are proposing to publish articles which may be, like Mr. Dunham's, of general interest to fellow-members to get in touch with the Executive Secretary, so that arrangements for the necessary off-prints may be made, and this valuable contribution to our common concern kept up.

Yours very sincerely,

Edward W. Forbes

Edward W. Forbes
President